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# Bill on Speed-up of B-70 Cleared for Early Vote

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Legislation to "direct" the Administration to accelerate the controversial B-70 bomber program was cleared by the Rules Committee yesterday for full House debate and an early vote.

Priority status for the 13-billion-dollar defense authorization bill carrying the added B-70 funds was voted as Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara briefed key Senators on "new intelligence matters."

Apparently affecting the B-70, missile defense and other matters.

Chairman Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) of the Senate Armed Services Committee and reporters who learned of the unannounced secret briefing that he had suggested it after McNamara had given him certain information concerning both missiles and manned aircraft developments.

Russell said there was discussion of the argument over the B-70 and the Nike-Zeus

antimissile missile program, and of "a wide variety of matters" including "various aspects of the missile program."

Top-ranking members of both the Senate Armed Services and the Appropriations Committee attended, indicating that it was a session of the special Senate watchdog group, that deals with the Central Intelligence Agency.

McNamara has opposed putting more money at this time into the B-70 or Nike-Zeus, both of which have strong backers in Congress, the Pentagon and industry. He has forcefully expressed his opposition to the House Armed Services Committee's attempt to order the Administration to go ahead with development of a new version of the B-70.

And he reportedly is just about convinced that before the Zeus is put into production there must be some sort of a technical breakthrough that would enable the missile to cope with a barrage of ICBMs.

## Secret Data

Last week, McNamara said he would go before other congressional committees to explain more fully his opposition to any decision now to develop the RS-70, the proposed next version of the B-70 as a complete weapons system. The Administration's 1963 budget provides \$175 million to build three test B-70 airframes that would not be bombers.

McNamara's full answer to House Armed Services Chairman Carl Vinson (D-Ga.) on the B-70 necessarily would include highly secret intelligence data on Russian plans for new bombers and air defense forces. Similarly, his reasons for opposing production of the Zeus would include the status of Soviet missile offense and defense.

A major reason for both the present and previous Administration opposition to Army proposals to put the Zeus into production has been that individual batteries can be "saturated" by a barrage of enemy ICBMs.

## Tests This Spring

The Army has solved many other predicted defects in the Zeus and now is confident that actual tests of the antimissile missile, starting this spring in the mid-Pacific against Atlas ICBMs, will show that it can destroy descending missiles and discriminate between decoys and the real thing.

But even if these tests are successful, McNamara is unlikely to approve any substantial Zeus production and deployment which easily could cost \$8 billion to \$10 billion. The Army has urged initial production of a limited force of Zeus missiles to protect key centers, but some Pentagon officials feel that McNamara may oppose any production of the Zeus, except in the unlikely event of a breakthrough enabling the missile to cope with a saturation enemy attack on such targets.